

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI :

282. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 26,400 for Legislative Council by Rs. 100.

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI :

283. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 26,400 for Legislative Council by Rs. 100.

MR. A. J. JOHN :

284. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 26,400 for Legislative Council by Rs. 100.

15. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION—SRI MULAM POPULAR
ASSEMBLY—*Total grant.*

MR. A. K. PILLAI :

285. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 15,600 for Sri Mulam Popular Assembly by Rs. 10.

MR. K. I. JOSEPH :

286. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 15,600 for Sri Mulam Popular Assembly by Rs. 10.

MR. TARIATU KUNJITOMMAN :

287. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 15,600 for Sri Mulam Popular Assembly by Rs. 100.

Motions for reduction of total grant under Demand IX.

MR. S. PIRAVIPERUMAL PILLAI :

288. To reduce the total amount of Rs. 2.01 lakhs under Demand IX by Re. 1.

MR. G. RAMAN MENON :

289. To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 2.01 lakhs under Demand IX by Rs. 10.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI :

290. To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 2.01 lakhs under Demand IX by Rs. 100.

DEMAND X—GENERAL ADMINISTRATION—
ACCOUNT OFFICE.

MR. K. N. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I beg to move for a grant not exceeding Rs. 1.01 lakhs under Demand X—General Administration—Account Office.

Motion 291.

The following motion was not moved :—

MR. K. I. JOSEPH :

291. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 1.01 lakhs under Demand X by Rs. 10.

Motion 292.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): Sir, I beg to move the following motion.

292. To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 1.01 lakhs under Demand X by Rs. 100.

The object of the motion is to discuss the question whether officers should be allowed to reduce their age (*Laughter*). Sir, the particular point that I want to bring to the attention of the House is that, some years ago, there was strong public opinion in the country that officers after the retireable age should not be given extension of

service. Somehow or other, that was not very strictly put in force for some time. Within the last two or three years, that is strictly put in force, and officers are not generally given extension of service after the retireable age. Now, when the officers have found out that they cannot get extension of service, they have resorted to another trick by which they want to avoid the rule. To put it generally, when a man who has been a non-official is appointed to the service or when a man who has been an official is promoted to a higher grade or when he is made the head of a department, all on a sudden, he realises for the moment that he is too old and puts in an application to make him younger. (*Laughter*). And the curious part of the affair is this. An officer who is more than 50 or 51 years old comes forward with an application and wants the Government to believe him and to do away with all his past actions. All of a sudden, he wants the Government to believe him to be a younger man and enter the date of his birth or service accordingly. What I want to say is that, by this method of making an old officer young all of a sudden, there is an amount of heart-burning.

MR. C. P. THOMAS (*Nominated*): May I know which department is responsible for this?

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): I want to have the grievances of the people remedied; by which department, I do not care. I think that with regard to the preparation of service books and other things, the Account Office is directly in charge. Therefore, I thought it would be advisable to send in this motion under the head of Account Office. What I submit is that when these officers put in applications for reducing their age, that naturally causes some heart-burning to some other officers who are already in the service and in allowing or rejecting those applications the Government must be very cautious. I also want to know whether any evidence is taken before the application is allowed, and if any evidence is taken what is the nature of the evidence, and whether any counter-evidence on the part of the public or a man like me would be received. These are things which I want to know from Government. With this object in view, I sent this token motion, and I request the Government that in similar cases they should be very strict. An officer who has been executing documents for the last 50 years, an officer in whose name a number of documents stand, in all of which he makes an entry that he was born on such and such a date, all of a sudden puts in an application and makes the Government believe that he was born much later. Such of applications should be viewed very strictly by the Government.

MR. K. N. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Sir, one would think from the speech of the mover of this motion that there have been very many cases where the Account Officer or Government allowed the age of officers to be altered in the manner suggested.

MR. K. I. JOSEPH (*Minachil cum Devicōlam*): Were there not instances?

MR. K. N. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Financial Secretary to Government*): At any rate, not in the current year.

MR. K. I. JOSEPH (*Minachil cum Devicolam*): Has there been any instance during the last 5 years?

MR. K. N. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I remember one which occurred about 2 years ago. Even at that time, it was clearly stated that such cases were very few and they were not able to trace any from the old records. I am only speaking from memory, Sir, and I have not verified it. It is not a matter, Sir, where there are really many cases coming up before the Government and are being allowed.

MR. K. I. JOSEPH (*Minachil cum Devicolam*): Is it not a question of principle rather than of any particular case?

MR. K. N. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I am coming to that very point. I might perhaps also say, though I do not want to take shelter under the plea, that the position of the Account Officer in this matter is very simple. I will read the rule on the subject, for the benefit of the House. This is the Article in the Service Regulations about it.

"The age of an officer, whether gazetted or non-gazetted, can be recorded only on receipt of satisfactory proof, such as a baptismal certificate or a horoscope, or a certificate by a Magistrate or other well-known and trustworthy person in the town or village where the officer was born; and the age once recorded should not be altered except in case of clerical error, without the sanction of the Government".

Now, Sir, it may be asked, if the rule is so rigorous how this change can come about in the age. It can possibly happen only in the case of officers who were in service before the date on which the Civil Service Regulations were introduced. In future, it would be impossible for an officer entering service or for one who entered service within the last 20 years to come forward and say that the age previously given was wrong unless it was a clerical error.

MR. K. I. JOSEPH (*Minachil cum Devicolam*): Does it apply only to officers already in service or to those who are just entering service also?

MR. K. N. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Financial Secretary to Government*): It is applicable to all without distinction. In these circumstances, I do not know what there is exactly to defend in this matter, I think I have said everything I should say.

MR. K. I. JOSEPH (*Minachil cum Devicolam*): May I know whether in cases where such applications are made, Government would be pleased to publish them in the Government Gazette so that opportunity might be given to others to give evidence to the contrary?

MR. K. N. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Financial Secretary to Government*): That is a novel point. But Government will consider the suggestion.

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Neduvangad*): Are you receiving such applications for counting ages backward?

MR. K. N. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Financial Secretary to Government*): There may be some coming up, but the rigours of the Account Code are such that very few have any chance of passing through.

MR. K. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Neduvangad*): Are there large number of applicants?

MR. K. N. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I cannot say that at this moment, but I think there have been 2 or 3 cases which came up; but not in a single case has the applicant been allowed to alter his age so far.

MR. K. SIVARAMA PANIKKAR (*Shertallai*): May I know whether at the time the Civil Service Regulations were introduced, any notification was issued to the effect that if there was any error with respect to the age of any man in the service, that should be rectified within such and such a date?

MR. K. N. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I think it is not necessary. We are publishing the History of Services, and it will be seen from the first page that if any error is found out, it should be communicated to the Account Officer. Also every one is supposed to know the rule.

MR. C. P. THOMAS (*Nominated*): May I know whether it would not be helpful if Government publish a notification that a man who wants to enter service must once for all satisfy the authorities with evidence as regards his age and that he should not change the date afterwards?

MR. K. N. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I have already said that with regard to the people who enter service after the introduction of the Civil Service Regulations, the question can hardly arise, because a formal certificate has to be put in at the commencement of the service.

MR. C. P. THOMAS (*Nominated*): So you say that with regard to persons appointed after that date, there will be no chance of their changing the date?

MR. K. N. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Financial Secretary to Government*): There is absolutely very little chance of their being allowed to make successfully the proposition for changing the date.

MR. K. I. JOSEPH (*Minachil cum Devicolum*): Do the Government consider that such a certificate is conclusive or do they resort to documentary evidence in the matter of deciding age?

MR. K. N. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Financial Secretary to Government*): It is not absolutely conclusive. But at the same time the chance of allowing an alteration will be infinitesimal in the cases that I just referred to.

MR. C. P. THOMAS (*Nominated*): Is it not possible to prevent absolutely the possibility of injustice being done by ruling that in the case of new appointments the age should be decided once for all and that no opportunity should be given to any officer to revise it?

MR. K. N. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I am afraid we cannot do as the member suggests. We can only do this much and that is, we will consider the question of publishing any applications that might be made for the alteration of age. I do not think we can do more than that.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): Sir, though according to the Account Officer it is very difficult to evade the rules provided by the Service Regulations I think producing a horoscope or any other equivalent is not very difficult from our point of view. It may be that there are not many cases in which officers are allowed to make themselves younger. But the few cases like this attract so much attention of the public, since at a particular psychological moment the officer thinks that he should continue as the head of his department for two or three years more and with this object in view he attempts to correct his age. There are also cases in which officers wish to qualify themselves for additional pension, and this induces them to make similar attempts. Therefore, my point is that, in allowing such applications, the Government should act only on very strong grounds. Unless there are very strong grounds and conclusive proofs to support the officer, the Government should not allow such applications. When there are young men in the service who will be able to turn out more work, why should old men be allowed to continue for their own sake? Indirectly, efficiency also will be affected if such applications are allowed. Therefore, from the point of view of efficiency also, it is necessary that such applications are very carefully scrutinised and strong pieces of evidence insisted upon before such applications are allowed.

With these words, I beg permission to withdraw the motion.

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

PRESIDENT: I now put to the vote of the House Demand X—General Administration—Account Office—For Rs. 1.01 lakhs.

The grant was made.

DEMAND XI—ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

MR. KAYALAM PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*): Sir, I beg to move for a grant not exceeding Rs. 7.45 lakhs, under Demand XI—Administration of Justice.

Motion 293.

The following motion was deemed not to have been made since the member was absent.

298. **MR. T. J. MATHEW**
To reduce the allotment of Rs. 58,808 for High Court by Re. 1.

Motion 294.

MR. K. I. JOSEPH (*Minachil cum Devicolam*): Sir, I beg to make the following motion:

294. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 58,808 for High Court by Rs. 100.